



## OFFICE OF THE HISTORIAN

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840.48 Refugees/6-2844: Telegram

## *The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant) to the Secretary of State*

LONDON, June 28, 1944—5 p.m.

[Received June 28—3:28 p.m.]

5104. A memorandum has just been received from the Foreign Office with reference to the desire of the Department and the War Refugee Board to remove refugees escaped from enemy territory to southern Italy, as set forth in Department's 4413, June 3, midnight. The memorandum goes into detail with regard to points mentioned by Randall, head of the Refugee Department of the FO, as reported in Embassy's 4557, June 7, 5 p.m.<sup>98</sup> Substance of memorandum which follows:

1. The British Government shares anxiety of the President and the State Department for the speedy removal from southern Italy of refugees who have escaped from enemy territory. FO states that it was aware of the large number of refugees arriving in Italy from Yugoslavia and that it agrees emphatically with the view that escape of refugees to Italy from the Balkans should not be discouraged in any way. Marshal Tito has promised cooperation and the British authorities have taken such measures as are possible to alleviate the plight of Jews in Hungary.
2. **The British military authorities in the Middle East were willing and ready to accommodate 40,000 Yugoslav refugees in Egypt but as UNRRA has not yet been able to obtain the necessary medical staff the military authorities doubt that they can accommodate more than the 25,000 who have already arrived in Egypt.**

FO has therefore requested the European headquarters of UNRRA to expedite provision of medical staff.

3. The British authorities are making every effort to carry out plans already completed to move as many Jewish refugees as possible from the Balkans. A British ship can be ready at 30 days notice to proceed to Constanza for the evacuation of Jewish refugees as soon as the Rumanian Red Cross, International Red Cross and Swiss authorities in Rumania in conjunction with the Jewish agency for Palestine can make the necessary arrangements. It appears, however, that the German Government will in all probability not grant the necessary safe conduct in this case any more than in that of the SS *Tari* for which the American Embassy to [in?] Turkey had negotiated. The matter will, however, be actively pursued.
4. The British Government have agreed to the establishment of a refugee camp in Tripolitania and are examining the proposal that Sicily should become a destination for refugees.
5. FO agrees that camp Lyautey at Fedhala should not be opened to refugees from Italy as it must be kept available for those coming from Spain.
6. With respect to the proposal that HM Government should grant Palestine immigration certificates to Jewish refugees in liberated Italy, the British, although they do not doubt the desirability of moving them for operational reasons, nevertheless feel that as they are in an area where they are safe from enemy persecution, preference for rescue under the limited quotas allotted for immigration into Palestine must be given to those Jews who are still in danger of their lives and can be got to safety out of enemy controlled territory.

FO concludes by saying that this means that while considerable numbers of Yugoslav refugees from Italy have been received in Palestine already, the alternative places of refuge should be used to the greatest extent in order that Palestine may be kept available for Jews escaping in increasing numbers through Turkey from places of danger.

WINANT

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98. Not printed.↵